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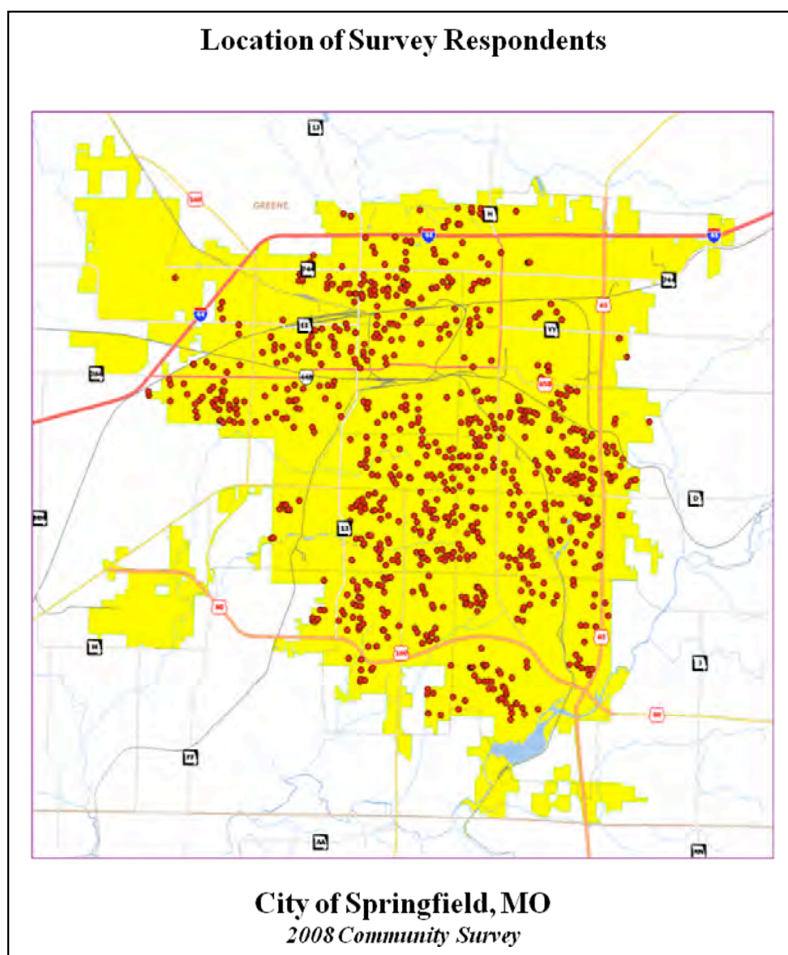
2008 DirectionFinder® Survey Executive Summary Report

Overview and Methodology

During the fall of 2008, ETC Institute administered a community survey for the City of Springfield. The purpose of the survey was to assess satisfaction with the delivery of major city services and to help determine priorities for the community.

Methodology. A seven-page survey was mailed to a random sample of 1,800 households in the City of Springfield during October 2008. Approximately seven days after the surveys were mailed, residents who received the survey were contacted by phone. Those who indicated that they had not returned the survey were given the option of completing it by phone. Of the households that received a survey, 450 completed the survey by phone and 380 returned it by mail for a total of 830 completed surveys. The results for the random sample of 830 households have a precision of at least $\pm 3.4\%$ at the 95% level of confidence. There were no statistically significant differences in the results of the survey based on the method of administration (phone vs. mail).

In order to better understand how well services are being delivered in different areas of the City, ETC Institute geocoded the home address of respondents to the survey. The map to the right shows the physical distribution of survey respondents based on the location of their home.



The percentage of “don’t know” responses has been excluded from many of the graphs shown in this report to facilitate valid comparisons between city services. Since the number of “don’t know” responses often reflects the utilization and awareness of city services, the percentage of “don’t know” responses has been provided in the tabular data section of this report (Appendix A). When the “don’t know” responses have been excluded, the text of this report will indicate that the responses have been excluded with the phrase “who had an opinion”.

This summary report contains:

- a summary of the methodology for administering the survey and major findings
- charts showing the overall results for most questions on the survey
- GIS maps that show the results of selected questions on maps of the city
- importance-satisfaction analysis, which identifies priorities for improvement
- a copy of the survey instrument.

Major Findings

- **Residents were generally satisfied with the overall quality of services provided by the City of Springfield.** Two thirds (66%) of those surveyed were satisfied (ratings of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale, where 5 means “very satisfied”) with the overall quality of city services; 28% thought the overall quality of city services were okay (rating of 3); only 6% were dissatisfied (ratings of 1 or 2).
- **Highest and Lowest Levels of Satisfaction.** The city services with the **highest levels** of satisfaction, based upon the combined percentage of “very satisfied” and “satisfied” responses among residents, who had an opinion, were: the overall quality of fire protection (86%), the overall quality of police protection (62%) and the overall quality of customer service provided by city employees (61%). Residents were **least satisfied** with the flow of traffic in the city (26%), the management of stormwater (37%), and the maintenance of city streets/infrastructure (40%).
- **Services that residents thought should receive the most emphasis from the City.** The three major services that residents thought were the most important for the City to emphasize over the next two years were: (1) flow of traffic in the city, (2) the maintenance of city streets and infrastructure, and (3) the quality of police protection.
- **Quality of Life in Springfield.** More than three-fourths (78%) of those surveyed who had an opinion gave positive ratings (ratings of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale, where 5 means “very good”) with the overall quality of life in the City of Springfield; 17% thought the quality of life in the City was okay (rating of 3); only 5% gave negative ratings (ratings of 1 or 2).

- **Residents think Springfield is a Good Place to Raise Children.** Nearly three-fourths (73%) of those surveyed who had an opinion gave positive ratings (ratings of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale, where 5 means “very good”) for Springfield as a place to raise children; 20% thought the City was an average place to raise children (rating of 3); and 7% gave negative ratings (ratings of 1 or 2).
- **Satisfaction with Neighborhoods.** More than three-fourths (77%) of those surveyed who had an opinion thought their neighborhood was a “good” or “very good” place to live; 15% thought the neighborhood was an okay place to live (rating of 3); and 8% thought their neighborhood was a bad place to live.
- **Neighborhood Issues that residents thought should be top priorities for improvement.** The three neighborhood issues that residents thought were the most important for the City to address were: (1) speeding in neighborhoods, (2) unmowed weedy lots/yards, and (3) drugs.
- **Maintenance.** The highest levels of satisfaction with maintenance services, based upon the combined percentage of “very satisfied” and “satisfied” responses among residents, who had an opinion, were: maintenance of City-owned buildings (78%), maintenance of street signs and traffic signals (70%) and cleanliness of City streets and public areas (63%). Residents were least satisfied with maintenance of sidewalks in their neighborhood (45%). The maintenance services that residents thought should receive the most emphasis over the next two years were:
 - Maintenance of major city streets
 - Quality of snow and ice removal on city streets
- **Parks and Recreation.** The highest levels of satisfaction with parks and recreation, based upon the combined percentage of “very satisfied” and “satisfied” responses among residents, who had an opinion, were: maintenance of City parks (80%), cleanliness of City parks (79%) and location of City parks (75%). Residents were least satisfied with city swimming pools (42%). The parks and recreation services that residents thought should receive the most emphasis over the next two years were:
 - Maintenance of city parks
 - Walking and biking trails in the City
- **Planning for the City’s future.** Residents were asked how important they thought various issues were regarding the planning of the City’s future. The issues with the highest levels of importance, based upon the combined percentage of “extremely important”, “very important” and “important” responses among residents, were:

- Keeping the crime rate low (98%)
- Ensuring quality public health services are available (93%)
- Having the City to provide leadership on energy conservation (91%).
- **Efforts to Educate Residents About the Underfunding of the City's Pension Fund for Police Officers and Fire Fighters Have Been Effective.** More than three-fourths (78%) of those surveyed indicated that they knew that the City's pension fund for police officers and fire fighters was underfunded by more than \$150 million.
- **Willingness to Support a 1-Cent Sales Tax to Avoid Cuts in Basic City Services.** Residents were asked how willing they would be to support a one cent sales tax that would sunset in approximately 4-5 years, in order to avoid cuts in basic government services. Twenty-five percent (25%) were very willing; 24% were willing, 23% were not sure, 10% were not willing and 18% were not willing at all.

Other Findings

- **Access to the Internet.** Seventy-nine percent (79%) of those surveyed indicated that they have access to the Internet at home. Among those with access to the Internet at home, two-thirds (67%) indicated that they have made a purchase on the Internet during the past three months.
- **Usage of City/County Parks.** Eighty-three percent (83%) of those surveyed indicated that they had used a Springfield-Greene County park during the past year; more than two-thirds (68%) indicated that they had used a walking or biking trail in the City of Springfield.
- **Most Residents Think the City's Efforts to Promote Recycling Should Increase.** More than half (55%) of those surveyed thought the City's efforts to promote recycling should be much greater over the next five years, 27% thought it should be somewhat greater, 13% thought it should stay about the same, only 1% thought it should be reduced, and 4% did not have an opinion.
- **Perceptions of Growth.** Sixty-one percent (61%) of those surveyed thought the City of Springfield is growing at the right pace; 24% thought the City is growing too fast; 6% thought the City is growing too slow; and 9% did not have an opinion.
- **How Residents Get Information About the City.** The percentage of residents who use various sources to get information about Springfield City Government are: local television news (88%), daily newspaper (68%), radio (53%), city utility inserts (40%), public signs (38%), and the City website (28%).